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SUBJ: NEW PRESIDENTIAL ASSISTANT SOUNDS OUT THE POLITICIANS

1. PRESIDENT SAYEM ON NOVEMBER 21 APPOINTED AS HIS SPECIAL ASSISTANT, RETIRED PAKISTAN SUPREME COURT JUSTICE ABDUS SATTAR. SINCE THEN, JUSTICE SATTAR HAS BEEN ENGAGED, AT THE PRESIDENT'S BEHEST, IN A SERIES

OF MEETINGS WITH A MOTLEY TEFAY OF MODERATE-TO-CONSERVATIVE POLITICAL LEADERS IN APPARENT EFFORT AT CREATING UNITY WITHIN THE COUNTRY. MOST OF THE LEADERS REPRESENT PARTIES WHICH HAVE BEEN DORMANT SINCE INDEPENDENCE, THUS GIVING RISE TO SPECULATION THAT SATTAR (WHO WAS ELECTED COMMISSIONER IN 1970) MAY ALSO BE SOUNDING THEM OUT REGARDING THE RESUMPTION OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY AND THE HOLDING OF ELECTIONS.

2. SO FAR, SATTAR HAS MET WITH A) ATAUR RAHMAN KHAN, FORMER CHIEF MINISTER OF EAST PAKISTAN AND HEAD OF THE TINY JATIYO LEAGUE; B) PHANI BHUSAN MAJUMDAR, A HINDU AND
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CABINET MINISTER THROUGHOUT MUJIB'S RULE; C) GEN. M.A.G. OSMANY, A MINISTER UNDER MJIB AND BRIEFLY MOSHTAQUE

AHMED'S DEFENSE ADVISOR; D) KHAN A. SABUR OF THE CONVENTION MUSLIM LEAGUE; E) AZIZUL HUQ (NANNA MIA), FORMERLY OF THE PAKISTAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY; F) A.F.M. ABDUL JALIL, ALSO OF THE PDP; G) OLI AHAD, PERIPATETIC POLITICIAN AND SINCE INDEPENDENCE HEAD OF HIS OWN JATIYO LEAGUE FACTION; AND H) MAULANA ABDUL RAHIM OF THE JAMMAT-I-ISLAMI.

3. JUSTICE SATTAR, WHO IS 69, HAS A GOOD REPUTATION BOTH AS A FORMER JUSTICE OF THE DACCA HIGH COURT AND THE PAKISTAN SUPREME COURT AND AS CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER FOR THE 1970 PAKISTANI ELECTIONS. BORN IN 1906 IN THE BIRBHUM DISTRICT OF WEST BENGAL, SATTAR HAS AN M.A. AND LAW DEGREE FROM CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY AND WAS A COUNCILLOR OF THE CALCUTTA CORPORATION PRIOR TO PARTITION. HE OPTED FOR PAKISTAN AND BECAME ACTIVE IN THE KRISHAK SRAMIK PARTY OF A.K. FAZLUL HUQ, SERVING AS A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND IN 1956 AS CENTRAL INTERIOR AND EDUCATION MINISTER. HE SERVED ON THE DACCA HIGH COURT FROM 1957 UNTIL RETIREMENT IN 1966; HE LATER SERVED AS JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT. UNLIKE HIS FELLOW RETIRED JUSTICE, PRESIDENT SAYEM, SATTAR IS A SEASONED POLITICIAN, ALBEIT OF THE OLDER GENERATION.

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